

c.) Remarks:

Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested.

Claims 5, 7, 8, 10 , and 16 have been amended to overcome the indefiniteness thoughtfully pointed out by the examiner. However, claim 5 has not been amended in line 5 because the "one surface" is recited in lines 3 and 4 of such claim, thereby providing antecedent basis for the term "one surface" appearing in line 5. It is believed the objections to these claims have been overcome.

Claim 1 has been amended to distinguish applicant's invention more clearly over all of the references of record, including Cooper. More specifically, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the substance of allowable claim 2, thereby making claim 1 allowable.

Since each of claims 3 and 4-7 depends on claim 1, such claims are considered to be allowable.

Claim 8 also has been amended in such manner as to distinguish the invention more clearly over all of the prior art, including Wachi. As amended, claim 8 recites means coupling the first and second body members and specifies that the coupling means comprises a flexible strap having opposite ends joined to first and second retainers. Although Wachi discloses various kinds of coupling means, none of them appears to be flexible. On the contrary, the connector 22 is described in column 2, lines 35 and 36 as being formed of a "hard synthetic resin." The same description applies to the second connectors 23. See column 2, lines 42-43. Claim 8 also requires each of the retainers to correspond in construction.

This is not applicable to the connectors or retainers of Wachi whose retainers clearly are different from one another as is shown in Figures 3-8.

Claim 8 further distinguishes over Wachi by requiring the stem of each retainer to have at its opposite ends an enlargement which extends both axially and laterally beyond such stem so as to extend beyond the associated opening a distance to enable the enlargement to overlie an adjacent portion of the body member when the stem is within one of such openings. Claim 8 is believed to be allowable.

Each of claims 9-15 depends, ultimately, on claim 8 and, therefore, is believed to be allowable along with its parent claim.

Claim 16 has been amended to overcome the objection referred to by the examiner. Accordingly, claim 16 and its dependent claims 17 and 18 are believed to be allowable.

It is respectfully submitted that Wachi is not a proper reference for application against any of the claims of this application. Section 102(b) refers to "the invention." Applicant's invention is claimed to be a trivet. The invention disclosed in Wachi is a bullet-proof garment. There is nothing in Wachi which even remotely relates to a trivet. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the only relevance Wachi has to applicant's invention is that which is acquired by hindsight as a result of applicant's own disclosure. It is believed to be obvious that one seeking solutions in the designing of a trivet would not look to the bullet-proof garment art for suggestions in the absence of first having the benefit of applicant's disclosure. However, even if the disclosure of Wachi is relied upon for whatever relevant teaching it may contain, the retained claims in this application patentably distinguish

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applicant's invention over the disclosure of Wachi.

This application now is believed to be in condition for allowance.

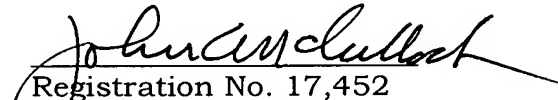
Such action is requested.

The Office is authorized to charge or refund any fee deficiency or excess to Deposit Account No. 50-2676.

Respectfully submitted,

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